## UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT of the INTERIOR

FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

Most - Interior 5634

For Release JULY 29, 1963

## INTERIOR DEPARTMENT ANNOUNCES SURPLUS BIG-GAME SALES

Anyone wanting a live buffalo or longhorn to turn loose on the home range or a few choice cuts of elk or buffalo meat for the barbecue should place his order before September 30, 1963, for the annual Interior Department surplus big-game disposal sales at three national wildlife refuges.

Certain animals are removed from these refuges each year to prevent the herds from exceeding the capacity of the range.

A total of 250 buffalo, 50 elk, and 117 longhorn cattle will be sold this year. The buffalo will be sold from all three refuges--Wichita Mountains Wildlife Refuge, Cache, Okla.; Fort Niobrara National Wildlife Refuge, Valentine, Nebr.; and the National Bison Range, Moiese, Mont. Longhorns will be sold only from Wichita Mountains and Fort Niobrara, with sales restricted to live animals. Elk sales will be from the Wichita Mountains Refuge. There will be no sales of live elk.

Buffalo will sell for \$165 each for live animals, and from \$220 to \$270 per carcass for butchered animals, depending on the processing. Quarters and halves will also be sold. Elk and buffalo meat will be available packaged and frozen, except from the National Bison Range where only fresh, unfrozen meat will be available. Orders to the National Bison Range, therefore, should come only from the northwest.

Butchered elk prices will range from \$110 to \$145 per animal, again varying with the type of processing. A half carcass is the minimum quantity that can be purchased. The longhorn cattle will be sold only through local public auctions, to be held September 19 at the Wichita Mountains Refuge, and on October 8 at Fort Niobrara.

If the number of orders received by refuge managers on or before September 30 exceeds the number of animals authorized for disposal, a drawing will be held October 1 to select applicants. Any orders received after September 30 will be honored on a first-come-first-served basis, provided animals or meat are still available after that date.

The official price list and conditions of sale can be obtained from the managers of the respective refuges or from the Fish and Wildlife Service, Department of the Interior, Washington, D. C., 20240, but <u>orders</u> should be sent <u>only</u> to the manager of the refuge involved.

 $x \times x$